2008 | 2009

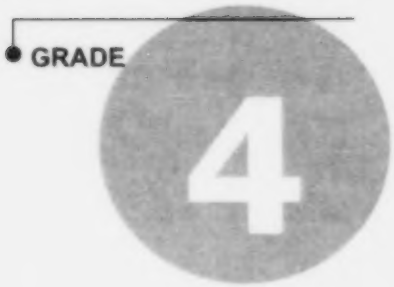
Grade 4

Catholic School Version

Curriculum Handbook for Parents

www.education.alberta.ca

Alberta Education



Curriculum Handbook for **Parents**

Catholic School Version

2008–2009

This Curriculum Handbook provides parents with information about the Grade 4 curriculum. It includes:

- selected learning outcomes for each subject area from the provincial curriculum
- links to the Alberta Education Web site where more information can be found
- a feedback form.

Alberta Education

This document, along with most Alberta Education documents, can be found on the Web site at http://education.alberta.ca.

Parent documents referenced in this handbook, along with most Alberta Education documents, are available for purchase from:

Learning Resources Centre
12360 – 142 Street
Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, T5L 4X9
Telephone: 780–427–2767
Toll-free: 310–0000 (inside Alberta)
Fax: 780–422–9750
Internet: http://www.lrc.education.gov.ab.ca/pro/default.html

Telephone numbers of branches referred to in this handbook can be reached, toll-free inside Alberta, by dialling 310–0000.

Curriculum Branch
Telephone: 780–427–2984
Fax: 780–422–3745
E-mail: curric.contact@edc.gov.ab.ca

Distributed Learning Resources Branch
Telephone: 780–674–5350
Fax: 780–674–6561
E-mail: DLRB.General@gov.ab.ca

First Nations, Métis and Inuit Services
Telephone: 780–415–9300
Fax: 780–415–9306
E-mail: FNMIServices@gov.ab.ca

French Language Services Branch
Telephone: 780–427–2940
Fax: 780–422–1947
E-mail: LSB@edc.gov.ab.ca

Learner Assessment
Telephone: 780–427–0010
Fax: 780–422–4200
E-mail: LAcontact@edc.gov.ab.ca

Learning and Teaching Resources Branch
Telephone: 780–427–2984
Fax: 780–422–0576
E-mail: curric.contact@edc.gov.ab.ca

Learning Technologies Branch
Telephone: 780–415–8528
Fax: 780–422–9157
E-mail: ltbgeneral@gov.ab.ca

- For information about LearnAlberta.ca
  Telephone: 780–415–8528
  Fax: 780–422–9157
  E-mail: LearnAlberta.Contact@edc.gov.ab.ca

Special Programs Branch
Telephone: 780–422–6326
Fax: 780–422–2039
E-mail: Special.Programs@gov.ab.ca

ISSN 1483–1759

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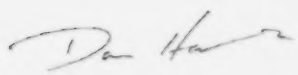
Message from the
Minister of Education

In today's busy households, where our Kindergarten to Grade 12 students are involved in every kind of extracurricular activity imaginable, it is especially important parents and guardians are kept informed about what their students are learning in the classroom. That is why each year Alberta Education develops the curriculum handbooks series—an insightful guide that outlines what students across the province will learn at their respective grade levels.

We know you play a critical role in determining your child's future success. I am confident this handbook will engage you in Alberta's curriculum, your student's studies, and answer any questions you may have on what your child is learning. I also hope this publication will create an opportunity for open dialogue between you, your child and his or her teacher regarding curriculum outcomes and expectations.

Alberta's curriculum is recognized for its excellence—and our students are thriving as a result. I encourage you to see this handbook as a window into your child's learning and as a resource in understanding how we help students reach their full potential. If you have any questions about the content of this handbook, do not hesitate to contact your child's teacher or school.

I hope you find this handbook helpful and informative and I wish you and your student every success this school year.



Dave Hancock, Q.C.
Minister, Alberta Education

Dear Parents and Guardians:

On behalf of the Catholic Bishops of Alberta, I wish to express my appreciation to the Government of Alberta and Alberta Education for providing you this updated Kindergarten to Grade 12 Curriculum Handbooks for Parents.

You, parents, are the first and primary educators of your children especially with regards to education in the faith. By ensuring that the Gospel is truly lived in the context of your family and in the life of our schools and communities you are a powerful witness for your children. The role of the parents is vital in providing the best possible education for our children.

When you enroll your children in a Catholic school you can be assured of our support in your role. I encourage you to work closely with the school by joining your local school councils or parent groups. You can assist young men and women, boys and girls, to understand themselves as moral persons living the way of Christ through the experience and teaching of the Catholic Church. Be a strong voice for the Catholic identity of our schools. In this way, you will share in the central mission of the Church, which is to proclaim Jesus and his Gospel in the world today and, in so doing, hand on our faith to our children.

We commend Alberta Education for providing these updated Curriculum Handbooks for Parents. They provide a comprehensive presentation of the content and expectations of the Religious Education program approved by the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops.

May their use be a source of growth in faith, hope and love in all of our communities throughout Alberta.

Sincerely Yours in Christ,

Bishop Frederick Henry
Diocese of Calgary
Education Liaison, Alberta Conference of Catholic Bishops

Introduction

Web site links for further information are provided throughout the handbook.

Students learn in a variety of environments—in their homes, schools and communities. Parents, teachers and community members form a partnership to assist this learning.

When parents know what children are studying at school, they can provide better home support for their children's learning. The *Curriculum Handbooks for Parents* are designed to assist parents in participating in their child's education by fostering an understanding of what students learn at each grade level.

Finding Information

Parents can find information about the curriculum and learning resources in a number of ways:

- Contact teachers or school administrators.

http://education.alberta.ca/parents/resources/handbook.aspx

- **Curriculum Handbooks** contain selected outcomes for each subject area from the Alberta programs of study. They provide a more detailed picture of each year. This Curriculum Handbook is one of a set from Kindergarten to senior high school produced in general and Catholic versions and in French. They are available on the Alberta Education Web site or for purchase from the LRC.

http://education.alberta.ca/parents/resources/summaries.aspx

- **Curriculum Summaries** for each grade level provide a brief overview of each year. The summaries are available on the Alberta Education Web site.

http://education.alberta.ca/teachers/core.aspx

- In Alberta, the provincial curriculum is organized into **Programs of Study**. They contain learning outcomes for each subject area from Kindergarten to Grade 12. They are legal documents that outline why the educational program is offered, what students are expected to learn and the basic principles about how students are to achieve the required knowledge, skills and attitudes. School authorities use the **Programs of Study** to ensure that students meet provincial standards of achievement. However, they have flexibility to decide how to teach the curriculum and the order in which it is taught. They are available on the Alberta Education Web site or for purchase from the LRC.

http://education.alberta.ca/teachers/com.aspx

http://education.alberta.ca/apps/lrdb

- The Authorized Resources Database on the Alberta Education Web site lists **Alberta authorized student and teacher resources**, most of which are available for purchase from the LRC.

http://education.alberta.ca

- The **Alberta Education Web site** contains information on learning from the early years to adulthood.

Helping Your Child at Home

Here are some important pointers for you to help your child learn.

- Be positive and encouraging in your approach to learning. It will help your child feel confident and enthusiastic about success.
- Talk to your child about schoolwork and help with homework when you can.
- Help your child set realistic goals and discuss progress in an encouraging way.
- Connect your child's schoolwork with everyday life and use these opportunities for problem solving in everyday situations.
- Keep in touch with teachers about your child's progress, including successes and achievements, not just concerns.

The following resources may help you. Check your child's school for availability.

This resource is available for purchase from the Learning Resources Centre (LRC). Order online at http://www.lrc.education.gov.ab.ca/pro/default.htm

- *The Parent Advantage: Helping Children Become More Successful Learners at Home and School, Grades 1–9*— Strategies parents can use to help their child improve organizational, reading, writing, spelling, mathematical, test taking and project skills at the grades 1–9 levels.

http://education.alberta.ca/media/356481/mathprbk.pdf

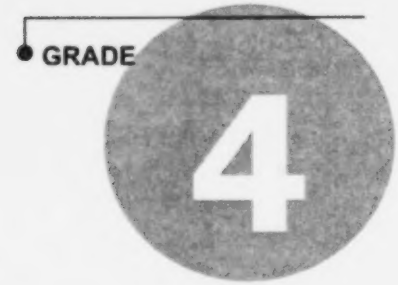
- *Working Together in Mathematics Education*—Ways parents can support student learning in mathematics.

http://www.learnalberta.ca

- *LearnAlberta.ca* Web site—Online multimedia learning resources that directly relate to the Alberta programs of study.

http://www.2learn.ca

- *TELUS 2Learn* Web site—An education/business partnership that provides Internet in-service, support and information for Alberta teachers, students and parents.



In Grade 4, students study required subject areas. Optional subject areas may be available at the local school. Students have access to 950 hours of instruction during a school year.

Overview

In Catholic schools, students participate in a Religious Education Program that is authorized by the Bishop of the local diocese.

The Grade 4 Alberta program of studies for each subject area sets out general outcomes or topics that provide an overview of the important learnings students accomplish. Specific outcomes are included for each general outcome or topic and state in detail the knowledge, skills and attitudes students are working towards achieving.

This handbook contains:

- the general outcomes or topics for each subject area
- selected specific outcomes for most subject areas.

The programs of study, which include all the general and specific outcomes, are available on the Alberta Education Web site or for purchase from the Learning Resources Centre (LRC).

View the core programs of study at http://education.alberta.ca/teachers/core.aspx

View the complementary programs of study at http://education.alberta.ca/teachers/com.aspx

Purchase programs of study from the Learning Resources Centre (LRC). Order online at http://lrc.education.gov.ab.ca/pro/default.html

GRADE 4: [REQUIRED SUBJECT AREAS] STUDENTS TAKE:

- English Language Arts
- Mathematics
- Science
- Social Studies
- Physical Education
- Health and Life Skills
- Art and Music

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is infused throughout English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies.

GRADE 4: [OPTIONAL SUBJECT AREAS] SCHOOLS MAY OFFER:

- Drama
- Languages★

★ Students in French immersion programs and bilingual programs in other languages take English language arts as well as language arts in the target language.

New Courses for 2008–2009 School Year:

- Mathematics (English and French)

Religious Education

Religious education is an essential and integral part of the life and culture of a Catholic school. Through it, students are invited to develop the knowledge, beliefs, skills, values and attitudes needed to build a relationship with God and community through the person of Jesus Christ. Religious education shares the same goals and objectives set forth for all good education, that is, the growth and development of the whole person in all his or her dimensions—physical, intellectual, emotional, social and spiritual.

Religious education has four essential characteristics.

It is **Trinitarian**. It recognizes God as the creator of all things who gives us Jesus. It is Jesus who reveals God to us, and in turn reveals God's Spirit, through whom we understand our faith.

It is based on **Sacred Scripture** through which we hear the mystery of God revealed, the call to be in relationship with God and each other, and we learn how to pray.

It is based on the **life experience** of the students through which they are invited to discern signs of God in their daily lives.

It is presented within the tradition of the **Catholic faith community** which, based on Church teachings, sacramental and liturgical life, provides students with experiences of faith, prayer, love and justice.

With an awareness of the uniqueness of each student and a recognition that religious development takes place through a process of stages and within a community, it is expected that program presentation will vary from place to place to meet the diverse learning and religious formation needs of all students.

The Religious Education Program for elementary and junior high schools is authorized by the Bishop of the local diocese. Some school districts have developed supplementary resources and adapted the program to better meet local needs.

The Grade 4 Religious Education Program explores the experience of the Church handing on the Good News of Jesus in the written Gospel. Through the Gospel stories of those people who encountered Jesus, we explore the meaning of Jesus Christ for us today. In the Gospels we hear the invitation given by the Holy Spirit to be disciples and friends of Jesus. The tree stump is used as a symbol of Jesus to evoke many meanings throughout the program.

Students explore these themes through the study of 10 units:

Unit 1
The Church hands on the Good News.

As a new school year begins, the students experience the joy and enthusiasm of new beginnings. They enter into the story of the first Christian community through the Pentecost story. The students receive the gospel book and begin to learn how to use it. They begin to develop reverence for the Bible as the word of God.

Unit 2
The Good News about Jesus Christ.

The students hear how the first Christians were attracted to Jesus, how they came to understand who Jesus is, and how the Gospels came to be written down, and how the Holy Spirit keeps alive the memory of Jesus through the Church.

Unit 3
Jesus tells us about the reign of God.

The students meet Jesus the story teller, entering into and enjoying the parables: the Sower, the Pearl of Great Price and the Good Shepherd. Through these parables they hear about the reign of God and are invited to wonder and delight in God's unconditional love, especially as seen by people past and present.

Unit 4
A light shines in the darkness.

Through the message of John the Baptist the students explore their experiences of darkness and light. Advent is celebrated as a season of longing and waiting for the great light: Jesus Christ, God-with-us. The Jesse Tree introduces the ancestors of Jesus and invites the students to be rooted in the life of Jesus.

Unit 5
Jesus, "born of a woman."

The students celebrate and explore the humanity of Jesus through Mary and Joseph, Simeon and Anna. They reflect on the uniqueness of Jesus' relationship with God. The students explore the Jewish heritage of Jesus and begin to appreciate that, as a Jew, he was deeply shaped by his people's customs, culture and encounter with God.

Unit 6
Jesus reveals the compassion of God.

The students are invited to see and hear the healing, preaching and prayer of Jesus through which he reveals to us the power and compassion of God. They reflect on our call to participate in the building of the kingdom of God.

Unit 7
Jesus says, "I am the Way."

Through Jesus' conversations with Nicodemus, the Samaritan woman, and Philip, the students are introduced to new life and rebirth in Baptism and the Holy Spirit. Story and symbol evoke in the students trust in the action of the Holy Spirit and the desire of God to immerse each of us in love.

Unit 8
Jesus gives his life for us.

The students are invited to deepen their understanding of the death of Jesus as an act of forgiveness and love through the stories of the Last Supper and the Way of the Cross. They reflect on the Eucharist as an invitation to live a life of love and service.

Unit 9
"My Lord and My God."

The students share the joy of the disciples while reflecting on the meaning and mystery of the resurrection of Jesus. They come to recognize Jesus in our midst and see how we share the life of the Trinity.

Unit 10
Jesus' Spirit is with us.

The students discover how Jesus continues to transform and affect our lives through the power of the Holy Spirit. They recognize that through Baptism and Confirmation we are empowered by the Spirit of Jesus and in faith we are invited to continue the mission of Jesus.

The school, through the Religious Education Program, complements parents in their role as primary and principal educators of their children. Home and family play a vitally important role in the faith development of children. Within the family, seeds of faith are planted. Family relationships and daily experiences are major factors in shaping a child's values, attitudes and Catholic identity. Regular religious practice and the application of classroom learning to daily life are critical parts of religious formation.

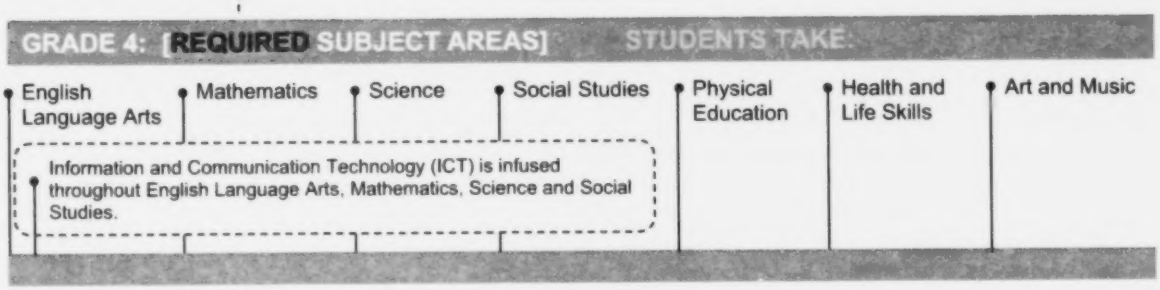
Prayer is an integral part of the Religious Education Program and of each school day since intimacy with God is the ultimate goal of Catechesis. Respecting the individual differences of children and our changing human needs, prayer is experienced in many different ways: silent reflection, guided imagery, scriptural prayer, ritual action, song and formal community prayer. The experience of classroom celebrations is an important component of the Grade 4 program. As we enter into prayer we give praise and thanks for God's loving presence, and call upon the Spirit to guide, nourish and empower our lives through Jesus Christ.

Teaching the sacraments occurs within the Religious Education Program. Sacraments celebrate the presence of Christ in our lives. They are effective signs that make God's grace present to us in love, healing and the transformation of our lives. Eucharist and Reconciliation are an essential part of each child's religious formation and a necessary grounding for a mature faith. As with many basic themes, Eucharist and Reconciliation are introduced in Grade 1, but continue to be deepened and intensified in each year thereafter. Children who have not yet celebrated First Communion or First Reconciliation are always welcome to contact their parish to begin their immediate preparation for the sacraments.

The Religious Education Program interprets for the students what the Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches about our faith in a manner appropriate to the age and development of the students. Not everything in the Catechism is incorporated because, as the Catechism itself points out, what is taught must be adapted to the "differences of culture, age, spiritual maturity, and social and ecclesial conditions among all those to whom it is addressed" (#24). Specific excerpts are quoted at the end of each theme for the teacher to help root the contents and activities of the theme in Church tradition.

The Religious Education Program is structured around the Church liturgical year. This enables students to live and express faith in an integrated way at school, at home and in the parish community.

The **required subject areas** are the foundation of the elementary program.



English Language Arts

View the English language arts subject page at http://education.alberta.ca/teachers/core/english/programs.aspx

There are two basic aims of English language arts. One aim is to encourage, in students, an understanding and appreciation of the significance and artistry of literature. A second aim is to enable each student to understand and appreciate language and to use it confidently and competently for a variety of purposes, with diverse audiences and in a range of situations for communication, personal satisfaction and learning.

From Kindergarten to Grade 12, students are developing knowledge, skills and attitudes in six language arts: Listening and Speaking; Reading and Writing; Viewing and Representing. Students learn to compose, comprehend and respond to oral, print and other media texts. They experience a variety of texts from many cultural traditions.

In a Catholic school, students are invited to consider how the knowledge, skills and values studied within the language arts curriculum are integrated with other subject areas, including religious education, and reflect the Catholic identity of the school.

The following learning outcomes are selected from the Grade 4 English Language Arts Program of Studies.

Explore thoughts, ideas, feelings and experiences

- ask questions, paraphrase and discuss to explore ideas and understand new concepts
- identify areas of personal accomplishment and areas for enhancement in language learning and use

- identify other perspectives by exploring a variety of ideas, opinions, responses and oral, print and other media texts
- use talk, notes, personal writing and representing to record and reflect on ideas, information and experiences

Comprehend and respond personally and critically to oral, print and other media texts

- use ideas and concepts, developed through personal interests, experiences and discussion, to understand new ideas and information
- extend sight vocabulary to include words frequently used in other subject areas
- integrate knowledge of phonics and sight vocabulary with knowledge of language and context clues to read unfamiliar words in context
- identify the main events in oral, print and other media texts; explain their causes, and describe how they influence subsequent events
- identify and explain connections among events, setting and main characters in oral, print and other media texts
- produce oral, print and other media texts that follow a logical sequence, and demonstrate clear relationships between character and plot

Manage ideas and information

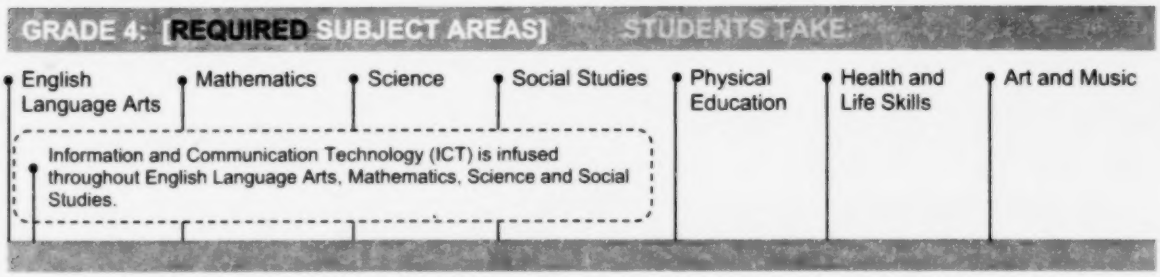
- use organizational patterns of expository texts to understand ideas and information
- ask relevant questions, and respond to questions related to particular topics
- identify information sources that inform, persuade or entertain, and use such sources appropriately
- make notes of key words, phrases and images by subtopics; cite titles and authors of sources alphabetically
- communicate ideas and information in a variety of oral, print and other media texts, such as short reports, talks and posters
- identify strengths and areas for improvement in research process

Enhance the clarity and artistry of communication

- revise to ensure an understandable progression of ideas and information
- write legibly, using a style that demonstrates awareness of alignment, shape and slant
- use special features of software when composing, formatting and revising texts
- identify past, present and future action
- identify and apply common spelling generalizations in own writing
- present to peers ideas and information on a topic of interest, in a well-organized form
- add interest to presentations through the use of props, such as pictures, overheads and artifacts
- give constructive feedback, ask relevant questions, and express related opinions in response to oral and visual presentations

Respect, support and collaborate with others

- identify and discuss main characters, plots, settings and illustrations in oral, print and other media texts from diverse cultures and communities
- identify and discuss differences in language use in a variety of school and community contexts
- ask for and provide information and assistance, as appropriate, for completing individual and group tasks
- use brainstorming, summarizing and reporting to organize and carry out group projects
- assess group process, using established criteria, and determine areas for improvement


GRADE 4: [REQUIRED SUBJECT AREAS] STUDENTS TAKE:
English Language Arts
Mathematics
Science
Social Studies
Physical Education
Health and Life Skills
Art and Music
Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is infused throughout English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies.

Mathematics

View the mathematics subject page at http://education.alberta.ca/teachers/core/math/programs.aspx

The main goals of mathematics education are to prepare students to:

- use mathematics to solve problems
- communicate and reason mathematically
- appreciate and value mathematics
- make connections between mathematics and its applications
- commit themselves to lifelong learning
- become mathematically literate adults, using mathematics to contribute to society.

Students who have met these goals will:

- gain understanding and appreciation of the contributions of mathematics as a science, philosophy and art
- exhibit a positive attitude toward mathematics
- engage and persevere in mathematical tasks and projects
- contribute to mathematical discussions
- take risks in performing mathematical tasks
- exhibit curiosity.

The following learning outcomes are selected from the Grade 4 Mathematics Program of Studies.

Number

Describe and apply mental mathematics strategies, such as:

- skip counting from a known fact
- using doubling or halving
- using doubling or halving and adding or subtracting one more group
- using patterns in the 9s facts
- using repeated doubling to determine basic multiplication facts to 9×9 and related division facts.

Demonstrate an understanding of multiplication (2- or 3-digit by 1-digit) to solve problems by:

- using personal strategies for multiplication with and without concrete materials
- using arrays to represent multiplication
- connecting concrete representations to symbolic representations
- estimating products
- applying the distributive property.

Demonstrate an understanding of division (1-digit divisor and up to 2-digit dividend) to solve problems by:

- using personal strategies for dividing with and without concrete materials
- estimating quotients
- relating division to multiplication.

Represent and describe decimals (tenths and hundredths), concretely, pictorially and symbolically.

Patterns and Relations

Represent, describe and extend patterns and relationships, using charts and tables, to solve problems.

Solve one-step equations involving a symbol to represent an unknown number.

Shape and Space

Read and record time, using digital and analog clocks, including 24-hour clocks.

Demonstrate an understanding of area of regular and irregular 2-D shapes by:

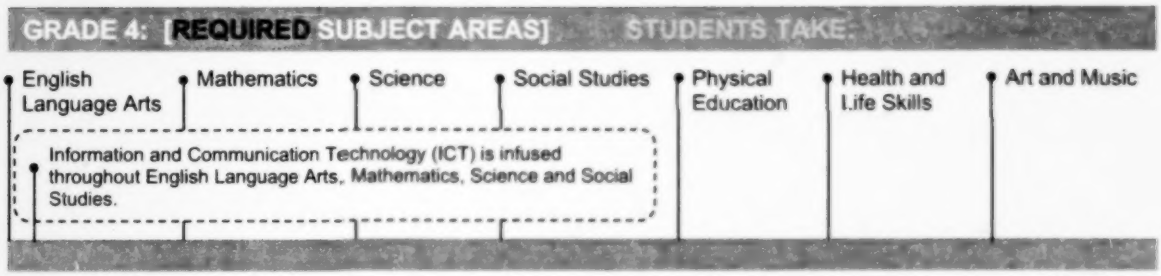
- recognizing that area is measured in square units
- selecting and justifying referents for the units cm^2 or m^2
- estimating area, using referents for cm^2 or m^2
- constructing different rectangles for a given area (cm^2 or m^2) in order to demonstrate that many different rectangles may have the same area.

Demonstrate an understanding of line symmetry by:

- identifying symmetrical 2-D shapes
- creating symmetrical 2-D shapes
- drawing one or more lines of symmetry in a 2-D shape.

Statistics and Probability

Construct and interpret pictographs and bar graphs involving many-to-one correspondence to draw conclusions.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Science

View the science subject page at http://education.alberta.ca/teachers/core/science/programs.aspx

View science digital resources on the LearnAlberta.ca Web site at http://www.learnalberta.ca

The aim of the science program is to encourage and stimulate children's learning by nurturing their sense of wonderment, by developing skill and confidence in investigating their surroundings, and by building a foundation of experience and understanding upon which later learning can be based. In elementary science, students develop their skills of inquiry and problem solving. They are also developing positive attitudes toward the study of science and the application of science in responsible ways.

In a Catholic school, students are invited to consider how issues of stewardship, morals, ethics and Catholic teaching can be integrated appropriately into the science curriculum.

The following learning outcomes are selected from the Grade 4 Science Program of Studies.

Waste and Our World

- identify wastes produced within their community and learn the methods used for disposal
- learn that some waste materials are biodegradable, that some are reusable, and that others are toxic
- recognize that human activity can lead to the production of wastes

Wheels and Levers

- examine how simple machines are used to change the speed or force of movement
- demonstrate a practical understanding of wheels, gears and levers by constructing devices in which energy is transferred to produce motion

Building Devices and Vehicles that Move

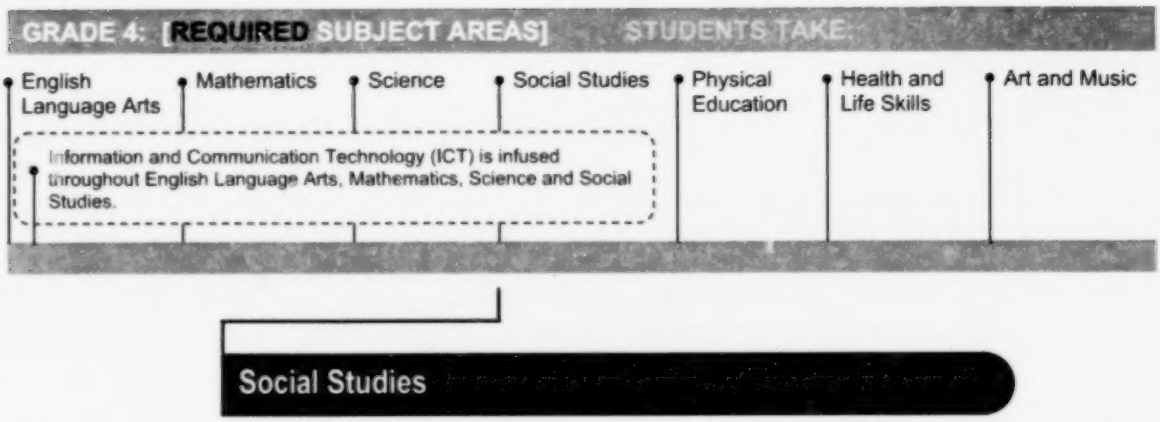
- learn that different forms of energy can be used to propel model devices
- construct a mechanical device for a designated purpose, using materials and design suggestions provided
- learn to evaluate their work, by describing the effectiveness of the device and the appropriateness of materials used

Light and Shadows

- discover that light and shadows fall along a predictable path by observing shadows and their motions relative to a light source
- discover that mirrors, prisms and a variety of other materials can affect that path by reflecting and refracting light and by splitting light into colours
- identify sources of light, describe the interaction of light with different materials, and infer the pathway of a light beam

Plant Growth and Changes

- learn various ways of starting new plants and the plants' requirements for growth
- learn that different plants have different needs, and, through hands-on activities, gain skills and attitudes for their care
- demonstrate knowledge and skills for the study, interpretation, propagation and enhancement of plant growth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English Language Arts
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Art and Music
Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is infused throughout English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies.

Social Studies

View the social studies subject page at http://education.alberta.ca/teachers/core/socialstudies/programs.aspx

The aim of the social studies program is to promote a sense of belonging and acceptance in students as they engage in active and responsible citizenship. At the heart of Alberta's social studies program are concepts of citizenship and identity in the Canadian context. It also includes multiple perspectives, including Aboriginal and Francophone, that contribute to Canada's identity. The program also has a strong focus on Canadian and Alberta history.

As they reflect upon the people, places and stories of Alberta, Grade 4 students will develop a sense of place, identity and belonging within Alberta.

Grade 4 students will explore the geographic, cultural, linguistic, economic and historical characteristics that define quality of life in Alberta. They will appreciate how these characteristics reflect people's interaction with the land and how physical geography and natural resources affect quality of life. Through this exploration, students will also examine how major events and people shaped the evolution of Alberta.

In a Catholic school, students are invited to consider how issues of social justice, the contribution of the Church to community (locally and globally), and Church teaching can be integrated appropriately into the social studies curriculum.

The following learning outcomes are selected from the Grade 4 Social Studies Program of Studies.

Alberta: A Sense of the Land

Students will demonstrate an understanding and appreciation of how elements of physical geography, climate, geology and paleontology are integral to the landscapes and environment of Alberta.

Values and Attitudes

value Alberta's physical geography and natural environment:

- appreciate the diversity of elements pertaining to geography, climate, geology and paleontology in Alberta (LPP)
- appreciate how Alberta's fossil heritage contributes to the province's unique character (LPP)

Knowledge and Understanding

examine, critically, the physical geography of Alberta by exploring and reflecting upon the following questions and issues:

- What are the major geographical and natural vegetation regions, landforms and bodies of water in Alberta (e.g., prairie region, forests, rivers, hoodoos, Rocky Mountains, oil sands)? (LPP)
- How are Alberta's provincial parks and protected areas and the national parks in Alberta important to the sustainability of Alberta's natural environment? (ER, LPP)

examine, critically, how geology and paleontology contribute to knowledge of Alberta's physical geography by exploring and reflecting upon the following questions and issues:

- How did archeologists and paleontologists discover the presence of dinosaurs in Alberta? (LPP, TCC)

analyze how Albertans interact with their environment by exploring and reflecting upon the following questions and issues:

- In what ways do the physical geography and natural resources of a region determine the establishment of communities? (LPP)

- Whose responsibility should it be to ensure the preservation of national parks, provincial parks and protected areas in Alberta? (C, LPP, PADM)

The Stories, Histories and Peoples of Alberta

Students will demonstrate an understanding and appreciation of the role of stories, history and culture in strengthening communities and contributing to identity and a sense of belonging.

Values and Attitudes

appreciate how an understanding of Alberta's history, peoples and stories contributes to their own sense of belonging and identity:

- recognize how stories of people and events provide multiple perspectives on past and present events (I, TCC)

Knowledge and Understanding

assess, critically, how the cultural and linguistic heritage and diversity of Alberta has evolved over time by exploring and reflecting upon the following questions and issues:

- How is the diversity of Aboriginal peoples reflected in the number of languages spoken? (CC, I, LPP)
- What movement or migration within Canada contributed to the populating of Alberta? (LPP, TCC)
- How did the arrival of diverse groups of people determine the establishment and continued growth of rural and urban communities? (CC, GC, LPP)
- How are agriculture and the establishment of communities interconnected? (ER, LPP)

Alberta: Celebrations and Challenges

Students will demonstrate an understanding and appreciation of how Alberta has grown and changed culturally, economically and socially since 1905.

Values and Attitudes

appreciate the factors contributing to quality of life in Alberta:

- demonstrate respect for the rights, opinions and perspectives of others (C, I)
- appreciate the influence of the natural environment and resources on the growth and development of Alberta (ER, LPP)

Knowledge and Understanding

assess, critically, the challenges and opportunities that Alberta has faced in its growth and development by exploring and reflecting upon the following questions and issues:

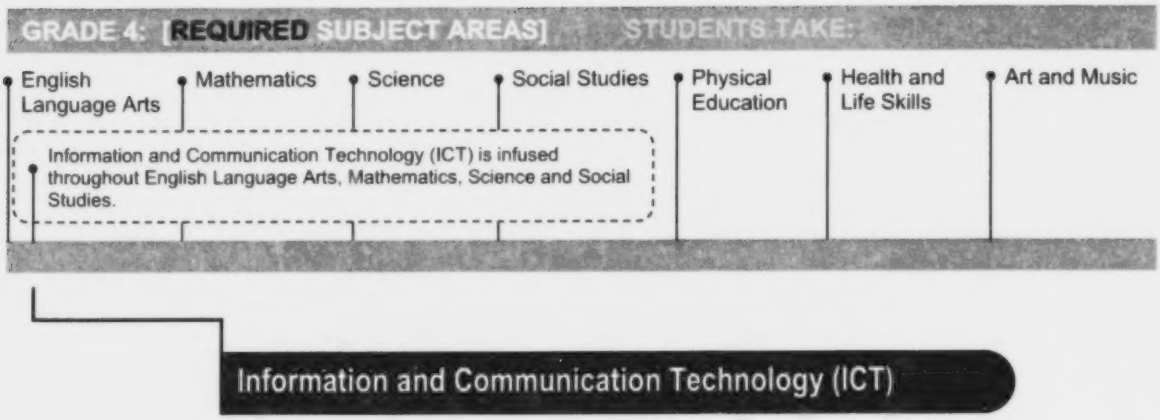
- What key events have impacted the economy of Alberta (i.e., drought of the 1930s, discovery of oil)? (ER, LPP, TCC)
- In what ways have occupations and commerce been affected by geography, climate and natural resources in Alberta (i.e., forestry, agriculture, aviation, seasonal activities, tourism)? (ER, LPP, TCC)

examine, critically, Alberta's changing cultural and social dynamics by exploring and reflecting upon the following questions and issues:

- In what ways has Alberta changed demographically since 1905 (i.e., population distribution in rural and urban areas, arrival of diverse ethnic groups, languages spoken)? (CC, I, LPP, TCC)
- How do buildings, historic sites and institutions reflect the establishment and cultural diversity of communities in Alberta (i.e., Glenbow Museum, Royal Alberta Museum, Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump, Writing-on-Stone Provincial Park, Father Lacombe Chapel Provincial Historic Site, Ukrainian Cultural Heritage Village)? (CC, I, LPP, TCC)
- How does living in a particular community, region or province help shape individual and collective identity? (CC, I, LPP)

examine recreation and tourism in Alberta by exploring and reflecting upon the following questions and issues:

- How do physical geography and climate affect seasonal activities throughout Alberta? (ER, LPP)
- In what ways do interests concerning tourism and the natural environment conflict? (ER, LPP)


GRADE 4: [REQUIRED SUBJECT AREAS] STUDENTS TAKE:
English Language Arts
Mathematics
Science
Social Studies
Physical Education
Health and Life Skills
Art and Music
Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is infused throughout English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies.

Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

View the information and communication technology subject page at http://education.alberta.ca/teachers/core/ict.aspx

Students learn how to use and apply a variety of information and communication technologies; the nature of technology and the importance of technology in daily life. ICT is learned most effectively in the context of subject areas such as language arts, mathematics, science and social studies. The ICT curriculum is not intended to be taught as a stand-alone course but rather to be infused within the teaching of other programs of study.

The ICT Program of Studies is organized by division. The following is a sample of the Division 2 learning outcomes that students are expected to meet by the end of Grade 6.

Communicating, Inquiring, Decision Making and Problem Solving

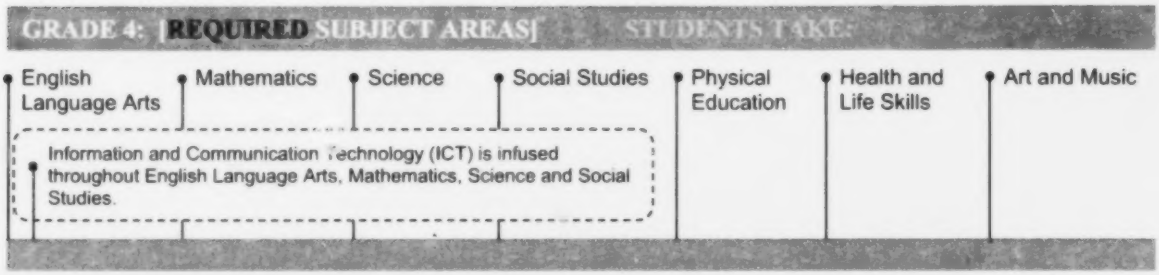
- access and retrieve appropriate information from the Internet by using a specific search path or from given uniform resource locations (URLs)
- use technology to assist in problem solving

Foundational Operations, Knowledge and Concepts

- identify and apply techniques and tools for communicating, storing, retrieving and selecting information
- examine the environmental issues related to the use of technology

Processes for Productivity

- edit and format text to clarify and enhance meaning, using such word processing features as the thesaurus, find/change, text alignment, font size and font style
- navigate through a document that contains links to locate, copy and then paste data to a new file



Physical Education

View the physical education subject page at http://education.alberta.ca/teachers/core/pe/programs.aspx

The aim of the K–12 physical education program is to enable individuals to develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to lead an active, healthy lifestyle. Students participate in a variety of physical activities: dance, games, types of gymnastics, individual activities and activities in alternative environments, such as aquatics and outdoor pursuits. All learning outcomes are to be met through physical activity as a means of fostering a desire in students to participate in lifelong physical activity.

Within Catholic schools, some of the values integrated into the Physical Education program include recognizing the dignity of each person as evident in their unique gifts and talents, community building, cooperation and shared responsibility, respect and care for the body.

General Outcome A: Activity

Students will acquire skills through a variety of developmentally appropriate movement activities; dance, games, types of gymnastics, individual activities and activities in an alternative environment; e.g., aquatics and outdoor pursuits.

- Basic Skills; Locomotor; Nonlocomotor; Manipulative
- Application of Basic Skills in an Alternative Environment, Dance, Games, Types of Gymnastics, Individual Activities

General outcomes B, C and D are interrelated and interdependent and are achieved through involvement in movement activities identified in General Outcome A.

General Outcome B: Benefits Health

Students will understand, experience and appreciate the health benefits that result from physical activity.

- Functional Fitness
- Body Image
- Well-being

General Outcome C: Cooperation

Students will interact positively with others.

- Communication
- Fair Play
- Leadership
- Teamwork

General Outcome D: Do it Daily ... for Life!

Students will assume responsibility to lead an active way of life.

- Effort
- Safety
- Goal Setting/Personal Challenge
- Active Living in the Community

Exemptions from Physical Education

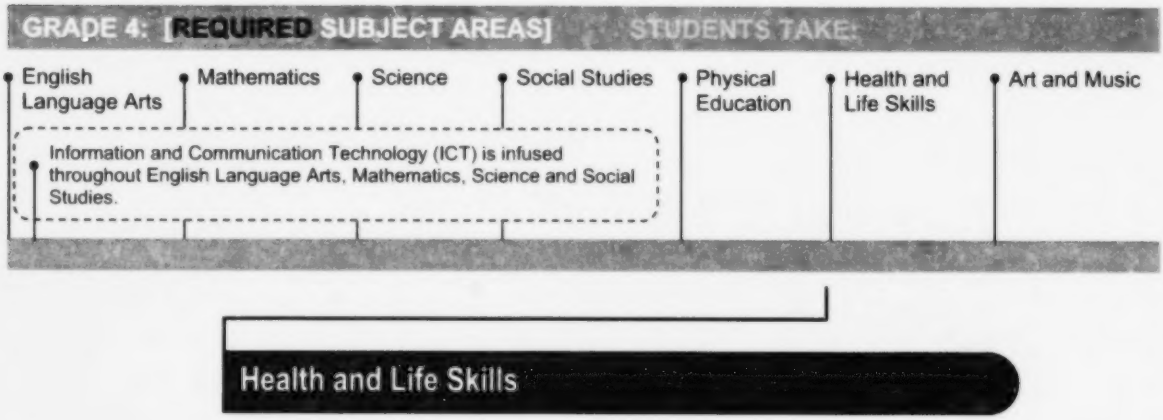
Exemptions from participation in physical education may be given for medical conditions, when accompanied by a medical certificate from a doctor to the principal; for religious beliefs, when accompanied by a statement in writing from the parent to the principal; and where access to facilities is prohibitive. When exemption is granted, activities consistent with the program outcomes should be substituted, where appropriate.

Physical Education Online

http://education.alberta.ca/physicaleducationonline

The Physical Education Online Web site provides a wealth of information to support student learning of the K–12 physical education program of studies. The site is organized into three major sections:

- Program of Studies—The general outcomes and grade specific outcomes for K–12.
- Teacher Resources—Links to authorized resources, the Guide to Implementation, teaching tools, and activities and lessons that address the outcomes for the K–12 physical education program.
- Home Education—This portion is designed for parents and teachers to use with students who may be enrolled in an online or home education physical education course.



Health and Life Skills

View the health and life skills subject page at http://education.alberta.ca/teachers/core/health/programs.aspx

The aim of the health and life skills program is to enable students to make well-informed, healthy choices and to develop behaviours that contribute to the well-being of self and others. A comprehensive health program involves a partnership among home, school and community.

In a Catholic school, learning outcomes are addressed within the context of the teachings of the Catholic Church. The local boards of many Catholic school jurisdictions have approved supplementary resources and adapted the curriculum to better meet the needs of their students, their families and their faith communities.

Wellness Choices

Students will make responsible and informed choices to maintain health and promote safety for self and others.

- Personal health
- Safety and responsibility

Relationship Choices

Students will develop effective interpersonal skills that demonstrate responsibility, respect and caring in order to establish and maintain healthy interactions.

- Understanding and expressing feelings
- Interactions
- Group roles and processes

Life Learning Choices

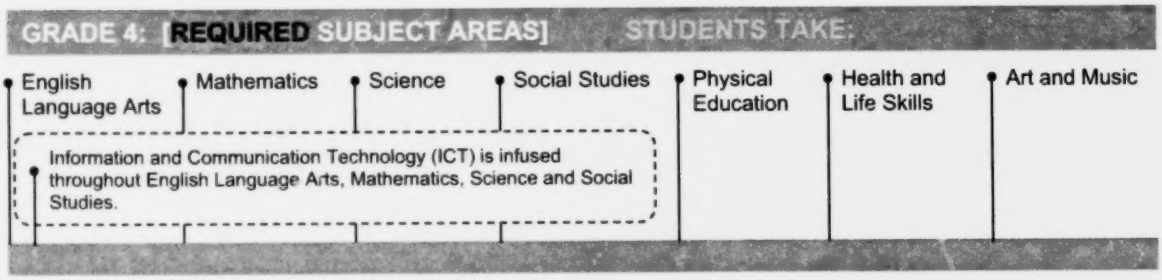
Students will use resources effectively to manage and explore life roles and career opportunities and challenges.

- Learning strategies
- Life roles and career development
- Volunteerism

Human Sexuality Education

Human sexuality education emphasizes the individual nature of change and growth, and the importance of one's family and personal values with respect to sexuality and sexual decision making. Learning outcomes are addressed within the context of Catholic teaching.

Schools are required to offer human sexuality education in Grade 4 to Grade 9. Parents have the right to exempt their child from this instruction. Schools will provide alternative learning experiences for those students who have been exempted from human sexuality instruction.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Art and Music
Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is infused throughout English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies.

Art and Music

View the fine arts subject page at http://education.alberta.ca/teachers/com/fine arts/programs.aspx

Through art and music, students develop self-awareness and express their creativity in many ways. They respond personally and critically to a variety of art and music styles and forms.

In a Catholic school, students are invited to consider how the knowledge, skills and values studied within the fine arts curriculum can be used to understand the religious dimensions of art, liturgy, music and history. They are also used directly to enhance the religious and spiritual culture of the school, and to celebrate the various liturgical feasts of the year.

Art

The aim of the art program is to enable students to learn visual arts skills and concepts, to interpret and communicate with visual symbols, to appreciate the cultural aspects of art, and to relate art to everyday life. The art curriculum has four major components: reflection, depiction, composition and expression.

The following learning outcomes are selected from the Grade 4 Art Program of Studies.

- make distinctions within classes of natural objects or forms
- assess the visual qualities of objects
- perfect forms and develop more realistic treatments
- improve compositions by refining, rehearsing and critiquing

- express a feeling or a message
- use media and techniques, with an emphasis on mixing media and perfecting techniques in drawing, painting, print making, sculpture, fabric arts, photography and computer graphics

Music

The aim of the music program is for students to develop an enjoyment of music, an understanding of a variety of music styles and an insight into music through a variety of musical activities. The music program is developed around the concepts of rhythm, melody, harmony, form and expression. These concepts are learned through participating in six skill areas: listening, moving, singing, playing instruments, reading and writing, and creating.

The following learning outcomes are selected from the Grade 4 Music Program of Studies.

- understand that beats may be grouped in 4s
- understand that tuned instruments can combine to make harmony
- understand that musical instruments have distinctive tonal qualities and may be grouped according to families
- identify major and minor chords
- respond to changes in tempo, dynamics and mood while singing
- develop skill in writing rhythm patterns
- notate and perform original compositions (does not have to be formal notation)

The range of optional subject areas offered by elementary schools varies from school to school depending on such factors as student and parent preferences, facilities and staffing.

GRADE 4: [OPTIONAL SUBJECT AREAS] SCHOOLS MAY OFFER:

- Drama
- Languages

Drama

View the drama subject page at http://education.alberta.ca/teachers/com/fine arts/programs.aspx

The aim of the drama program is for students to develop a positive self-concept by assuming other roles and acquiring dramatic skills. Play, dramatic play and structured dramatic play are the foundation for dramatic forms of expression. These include dramatic movement, mime, choral speech, storytelling, dramatization, puppetry, choric drama, readers' theatre, story theatre, playmaking and group drama.

Drama may be taught as a separate subject area or integrated with other subjects.

GRADE 4: [OPTIONAL SUBJECT AREAS] SCHOOLS MAY OFFER:

- Drama
- Languages

Languages

http://education.alberta.ca/teachers/resources/learnlang/educators/toolkit.aspx

A variety of courses in languages are available throughout Alberta. These courses include Aboriginal languages, French and International languages.

Alberta Education has approved numerous provincial language programs of study. As well, school authorities may develop and implement locally developed language courses to meet their needs.

Aboriginal Languages

Blackfoot and Cree Language and Culture

http://education.alberta.ca/teachers/com/aborlang.aspx

Blackfoot and Cree language and culture programs are designed to enable students to learn their respective languages and to increase awareness of their cultures.

The following learning outcomes are selected from the Blackfoot and Cree Language and Culture Programs of Study.

Blackfoot

- acquire basic communication skills in the Blackfoot language
- develop cultural sensitivity, and enhance personal development
- develop a desire to extend or improve proficiency in the Blackfoot language

Cree

- use Cree in a variety of community and school situations and for a variety of purposes
- know and use various strategies to maximize the effectiveness of learning and communication

- live *(wa)wētina(hk)* (peacefully) with Mother Earth, others and themselves, guided by *Ômâmawi Ohtâwîmâw* (the Creator)
- be effective, competent and comfortable as Cree speakers *(Okiskinamawâkanak ka nihtâ nehiyawewak)*

French

French Immersion Program

http://education.alberta.ca/parents/educationsys/frenchlanguage/immersion.aspx

In Alberta, many students have the opportunity to study in a French immersion program. This program, designed for non-French speaking students, offers an effective way for students to become functionally fluent in French while achieving all of the learning outcomes of the regular programs of study. Graduates from French immersion programs achieve a level of fluency in the target language that allows them to pursue their post-secondary studies in French or to accept employment in a workplace where French is the main language of communication.

There are many delivery models for French immersion present in Alberta schools.

- Early immersion—students begin their immersion experience in Kindergarten and continue in the program to Grade 12.
- Late immersion—the entry point is typically Grade 7.

Courses offered in the French language have as their basis a French version of the English language programs of study, which is identical or comparable to the one used in the English language programs. However, a program of studies specific to French immersion students was developed for the learning/teaching of French language arts. Some of the main French language arts learning outcomes are presented in the following section, French Language Arts.

A resource that may be helpful to parents is *Yes, You Can Help! Information and Inspiration for French Immersion Parents*. It is available for purchase from the LRC.

French Language Arts

http://education.alberta.ca/francais/teachers/progres/core/fla.aspx

In Division 2, the French language arts program of studies is intended to build on the skills acquired in the earlier grades, including vocabulary and syntax enrichment, to enable students to engage more actively with their environment. The program of studies also targets the development of the students' ability to plan and monitor their communication projects, whether they are working individually or with classroom partners. Students also learn to respect the basic rules of language in the oral discussions that take place in the classroom as well as in their writing projects.

In **oral comprehension**, students learn to pay particular attention to the organization of a message (text structure) and cues provided by the speaker (key words, connectives) to construct the meaning of the message and react to it.

In **reading comprehension**, students develop their ability to read longer, more complex texts. They learn to use a variety of tools to effectively solve difficulties they encounter in their reading.

In **oral production**, students learn the vocabulary and syntax that will enable them to express themselves in various contexts. They also develop the ability to plan group projects and to interact effectively with their peers.

In **writing**, students gradually learn to organize and express their ideas clearly, while still respecting spelling rules. They also learn to edit their texts using a checklist.

Note: The development of basic language skills does not take place in isolated exercises, but rather in context, so that students learn not only the rules but also when and how to apply them.

In Grade 4, learning occurs primarily:

In **oral comprehension** through:

- listening to texts from various subject areas
- listening to short stories or chapters from novels
- listening to audiotapes
- viewing audiovisual materials, such as documentaries, plays, movies.

In Grade 4, students will learn to focus on their communicative intent to direct their listening. They will also pay particular attention to the means used by the speaker or writer to emphasize important information or focus on a passage introducing new information. Students will also become aware of the importance of recalling life experiences and previous knowledge as a basis for understanding.

In **reading comprehension**:

Teachers will select **300 to 450** word texts of everyday life, or longer for narrative texts.

To develop reading strategies, students learn to focus on their communicative intent to direct their reading and make predictions throughout their reading using various cues.

In **oral production**:

Student presentations and discussions should be well structured, with emphasis on:

- the correct use of vocabulary to express themselves in various everyday situations
- the correct use of verb tenses to express their experiences clearly
- the effective use of visual supports for their presentations, making any necessary adjustments to facilitate understanding of their message.

Emphasis on teamwork enables students to continue developing certain skills required for interacting with their peers. They will now independently undertake work, which in the previous grade, was done with the teacher's help. This includes operational rules of group work such as the roles and responsibilities of each person and their right to speak. They learn to focus on their communicative intent and to use various tools to achieve their purpose.

In **writing**:

Students learn to write texts consisting of a few paragraphs that present and develop a given topic. They also learn to write short stories with brief character descriptions.
The main purpose of these learning activities is to enable students to integrate the basic elements of the written language:

- the choice and organization of ideas
- the organization of sentences
- the choice of verb tense and the agreement of common verbs in the present tense
- noun agreement
- spelling.

http://www.education.gov.ab.ca/k_12/curriculum/bySubject/fsl

French as a Second Language

In Alberta, the French as a Second Language (FSL) Nine-year Program is a course sequence in which the French language is taught as a subject. The goal of the course is to develop students' communication skills in French and acquire an appreciation and understanding of Francophone cultures in Alberta, Canada and the world.

The Grade 4 course is designed so that students can:

- understand and communicate, mostly by oral means, basic information related to their classroom, their classmates, their families, their pets, the calendar, the weather, an Alberta winter festival and certain holidays and celebrations
- gain language knowledge needed to understand and communicate messages for the above themes
- experience aspects of French language and culture in their immediate environment
- develop and use language learning strategies that will help them improve their learning of French.

International Languages

Bilingual Programs

http://education.alberta.ca/teachers/com/interlang.aspx

Students in a bilingual program follow a **language arts** course in the target language (e.g., Spanish, Ukrainian) in addition to studying English language arts. In these programs, the target language is also used as the language of instruction in other subject areas, such as mathematics, science and social studies.
Students acquire knowledge, skills and attitudes in the areas of listening, speaking, reading, writing, viewing and representing. They learn to use the target language confidently and competently in a variety of situations for communication, personal satisfaction and further learning. They are able to explore, understand and appreciate the cultures of the target language for personal growth and satisfaction, and to participate in and contribute to an interdependent and multicultural global society.

Alberta Education offers the following provincial courses for bilingual program students:

- Chinese (Mandarin) Language Arts
- German Language Arts
- Spanish Language Arts
- Ukrainian Language Arts

Language and Culture Programs

Students in a **language and culture** course study the target language (e.g., Ukrainian, German) as a subject area. Language and culture programs are designed to develop language and cultural skills.

Alberta Education offers provincially developed language and culture programs for Grade 4 students. At the elementary level in international languages, there are course entry points at Grade 1 and at Grade 4.

Students will:

- use the international language they study in a variety of situations for a variety of purposes
- use the international language effectively and competently
- acquire the knowledge, skills and attitudes to become effective global citizens
- know and use strategies to maximize the effectiveness of learning and communication.

Alberta Education offers the following language and culture programs:

- Chinese Language and Culture
- German Language and Culture
- Italian Language and Culture
- Japanese Language and Culture
- Punjabi Language and Culture
- Spanish Language and Culture
- Ukrainian Language and Culture

Italian Language and Culture (Twelve-year Program) is the only provincial course sequence that begins at Grade 1 and extends through to Grade 12.

Locally Developed Language Courses

If there are no available provincial programs of study, school authorities may develop their own language courses. Currently Arabic, American Sign Language (ASL), Hebrew, Polish and Russian are offered as local courses. Locally developed Aboriginal language and culture courses may also be available to meet the needs of students in local or First Nations schools.

For more information on second language instruction offered in your area, please contact your local school board.

Information for Parents

Learning in Alberta

Schools provide students with a broad educational program that helps them:

- develop knowledge, skills and attitudes in a variety of subject areas
- demonstrate critical and creative thinking skills in problem solving and decision making
- demonstrate competence in using information technologies
- know how to learn and work independently and as part of a team
- develop desirable personal characteristics and the ability to make ethical decisions
- demonstrate initiative, leadership, flexibility and persistence
- realize the need for lifelong learning.

Schools also prepare students to make positive contributions to society through communities, the workplace and/or post-secondary studies.

Within the context of Catholic schools, the curriculum in all of its aspects—content, the teaching process, and the total school environment—reflect the values of faith, hope, charity, forgiveness and justice as found in the gospels and the message of Jesus Christ as understood by the Catholic Church.

Teachers make a number of decisions when planning for classroom instruction. Within any group of students, there is a range of individual differences. Teachers use the learning outcomes of the provincial curriculum to meet the needs and interests of their students and to make connections across subject areas. They choose resources, equipment and materials to help students achieve the learning outcomes. Teaching methods and schedules vary from school to school and from class to class to meet the diverse learning needs of students.

In Catholic schools, there are many opportunities for integrating gospel values and nurturing the presence of God in our midst within the curriculum. Teachers will determine where religious education and Church teaching can be integrated with other subjects.

Alberta Education assists teachers by reviewing and selecting the best possible resources, such as textbooks, videotapes and computer software, for all subject areas. Authorization of resources by Alberta Education indicates that the resources meet high standards and can help students achieve the learning outcomes. Teachers can choose other resources, as long as they follow school board policy.

http://www.lrc.education.gov.ab.ca/pro/default.html

Authorized resources are available for purchase from the Learning Resources Centre (LRC).

School Councils

Schools, parents and communities all play an important advisory role in education. School councils are designed to give parents, senior high school students, teachers and other community members meaningful involvement in decisions that impact student learning. Each school council determines its own level of involvement, depending on local needs. Parents can get more information on how to get involved by contacting their school or the Alberta School Councils' Association (ASCA).

http://www.ahsca.ab.ca

http://education.alberta.ca/media/464094/scm.pdf

The *Alberta School Council Resource Manual* provides information on the operation of school councils and on key topics of importance to school councils and other education stakeholders.

School Fees and Fundraising

Decisions regarding school fees and fundraising are made by the local board or by the school principal in consultation with the school council within policy guidelines established by the school board. In September 2000, the Alberta School Boards Association (ASBA) developed and provided guidelines to school boards to assist boards in establishing appropriate local policy.

School Fees

http://www.asba.ab.ca/services_for_boards/policy_advisories_fees.html

The *School Act* allows for certain fees to be collected for alternative programs, transportation, or supplies and materials provided for the student's personal use or consumption; this may include such things as calculators, locker rentals, student planners and computer diskettes. The fees charged are on a cost recovery basis. Caution fees should be refunded at the end of the year if the item is returned in good condition.

The ASBA school fee advisory recognizes that fees should be waived for those who cannot afford them and that no student should be prohibited from participating.

Fundraising

http://www.asba.ab.ca/services_for_boards/policy_advisories_fund.html

Parents are not to fundraise for core items such as textbooks. Some fundraising is allowable for things like athletic uniforms, field trips and other extras that staff and parents want for their schools. Participation in fundraising activities should be voluntary. No student should be excluded from an event or program because the parents could not contribute.

School Choice

http://education.alberta.ca/parents/choice.aspx

Choice is one of the important principles of Alberta's education system. When it comes to selecting a school, parents and students can choose from a wide range of options. They can select from public schools, Catholic schools, Francophone schools, private schools and charter schools. They can also access a number of unique and innovative programs—including online schools. Parents can also opt to home school their children.

Information about Curriculum

Alberta has one of the best education systems in the world. One of the many reasons is a centralized, high quality curriculum that outlines what students are expected to learn and be able to do in all subjects and grades. Alberta's curriculum is designed to help students achieve their individual potential and create a positive future for themselves, their families and their communities.

Curriculum Content—Deciding What Students Should Learn

The Alberta curriculum strives to:

- reflect the essential knowledge, skills and attitudes that Alberta students need to be well prepared for future learning and the world of work
- anticipate and plan for the needs of the future by considering the changes and developments in society such as trends in employment, globalization and advances in technology
- incorporate values of good citizenship and respect for different languages and cultures
- consider students' needs and abilities—intellectual, social, emotional and physical—at different ages and stages of growth
- ensure that each grade provides a foundation of knowledge for successful learning in subsequent years
- incorporate new discoveries and theories that are generally accepted by experts in subject areas
- develop skills that are necessary for success in learning a subject
- consider new research on proven teaching methods and how students learn best
- reflect the most appropriate level at which the skills are to be acquired
- integrate how the study of a subject contributes to student personal growth and development

- accommodate learning in different environments
- consider various ways of delivering a program to students, including new technologies and use of community resources such as distance learning and workplace learning.

Curriculum Development—Who Is Involved in the Process?

Alberta Education takes a lead role in developing and revising provincial curriculum. However, many others, including teachers, principals, parents, education experts, post-secondary educators, elders and community members, play a vital role in the process. Input from various stakeholders ensures that curriculum continually meets the needs of students and that there are smooth transitions from grade to grade, to post-secondary education and to the world of work.

Ensuring Curriculum Is Current

Curriculum must provide students with the knowledge and skills needed for the present and future. It is reviewed regularly and changes are made to keep it current and relevant. Curriculum revisions occur only after extensive consultations with education stakeholders.

Planning Curriculum Changes

Alberta Education plans curriculum changes well in advance to minimize any impact on schools, teachers and students. This ensures that school authorities have sufficient time to prepare for the changes and plan for the purchase of any needed resources.

Revising Curriculum

If it is determined through the regular review process that there is a need to make minor or major revisions to a subject area in the curriculum, education stakeholders play a major role in the process. Alberta Education conducts initial consultations and prepares a draft *Program of Studies* for that subject area. The draft is shared with a wide variety of education stakeholders through advisory committees, online feedback forms, conferences and presentations to teacher specialist councils. Teachers play a vital role in the process. They use their practical knowledge about a subject and about students' needs at specific age levels to provide input and feedback during the process.

Implementing Curriculum

The draft *Program of Studies*, developed in consultation with education stakeholders, is referred to the Minister of Education for approval. Schools may have the opportunity to pilot the program for one year prior to full provincial implementation. This transition year gives schools time to prepare for the new curriculum. When a curriculum is implemented province-wide, all schools must teach the new curriculum. Alberta Education, in partnership with superintendents, boards, teachers, principals, parents and students, shares roles and responsibilities in the effective implementation of a new curriculum.

Alberta Education supports school authorities by producing teacher resources that provide ideas for lesson planning, instructional strategies and student assessment. Also, it provides orientation for school authority leaders and lead teachers about curriculum changes and shares updates at professional conferences and in-services.

http://www.arpdc.ab.ca

Professional development funds are provided to six Alberta Regional Professional Development Consortia. Each Regional Consortium organizes and provides activities to respond to in-service needs identified locally. This may include information and orientation sessions related to curriculum revisions.

http://www.lrc.education.gov.ab.ca/pro/default.html

Alberta Education selects and authorizes learning and teaching resources that are designed specifically to support the provincial curriculum. Alberta Education also provides funding to help schools purchase learning and teaching resources through the Learning Resources Centre.

First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education

http://education.alberta.ca/teachers/fnmi.aspx

First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples throughout the province have indicated they want their children to complete regular school requirements and achieve the same standards as set for all students in Alberta. Alberta Education shares this goal with parents.

To support the learning of First Nations, Métis and Inuit students, schools are encouraged to use learning resources that promote First Nations, Métis and Inuit perspectives. All students in Alberta should understand and be aware of First Nations, Métis and Inuit history, culture, lifestyles and heritage. The First Nations, Métis and Inuit (FNMI) initiative works to infuse Aboriginal perspectives into the existing Kindergarten to Grade 12 programs of study. The

http://education.alberta.ca/teachers/fnmi/policies.aspx

First Nations, Métis and Inuit (FNMI) Education Policy Framework (2002) provides further information on this initiative. Student and teacher resources have been developed by Alberta Education to support the inclusion of Aboriginal content in teaching and learning.

Both provincially and locally authorized Blackfoot and Cree language and culture courses are offered in the province.

http://education.alberta.ca/media/308566/aboriginalparenthandbook.pdf

A Handbook for Aboriginal Parents of Children with Special Needs provides information to assist Aboriginal parents in working with schools to meet the special education needs of their children. This resource is available for purchase from the LRC.

http://www.lrc.education.gov.ab.ca/pro/resources/item.htm?item-no=415712

Our Treasured Children is a videotape that complements *A Handbook for Aboriginal Parents of Children with Special Needs*. It highlights intergenerational stories from members of the Aboriginal community. The videotape is available for purchase from the LRC.

Daily Physical Activity

For more information about the DPA policy and resources to support DPA, visit the DPA Web site at http://education.alberta.ca/teachers/resources/dpa.aspx

School authorities shall ensure that all students in grades 1 to 9 are physically active for a minimum of 30 minutes daily through activities that are organized by the school. Daily Physical Activity (DPA) is based on the belief that healthy students are better able to learn and that school communities provide supportive environments for students to develop positive habits needed for a healthy, active lifestyle.

Schools have the responsibility of creating and nurturing a learning environment for students that supports the development of the lifelong habit for daily physical activity and for healthy lifestyles. The daily physical activities offered in your school should:

- vary in form and intensity
- take into account each student's ability
- consider resources available within the school and the larger community
- allow for student choice.

Parents can assist implementation of DPA and enhance the health benefits received by students through a supportive home environment; e.g., encouraging your child to be active every day, walk your child to school or facilitate a walking school bus program at school.

http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/pau-uap/paguide/

For further information and ways to increase physical activity at home, visit the Healthy U Web site or the Public Health Agency of Canada's Web site.

Career and Life Planning

Preparing for life and connecting learning and work is a complex process that begins in the early years of schooling and continues throughout our lives. Alberta schools are taking an active role—along with parents and the community—in helping students manage transitions within the K–12 learning system and when moving into further education, training, and/or the workplace.

In the elementary grades, students begin to discover their interests and abilities, and start to become aware of the opportunities available in the world of work. They also begin to develop life skills, such as cooperating with others and being reliable.

Personal and career development activities and outcomes are integrated into elementary courses and programs. In particular, the elementary health program focuses specifically on these topics.

Supports for Learning

Students have individual learning needs. Schools, supported by Alberta Education, provide a variety of programs and services to meet the individual needs of students.

English as a Second Language

http://education.alberta.ca/teachers/com/esl.aspx

Many children born in Canada have a first language other than English and many students move here from non-English speaking countries. Schools provide additional assistance for English as a Second Language (ESL) students in Kindergarten to Grade 12. This helps them acquire sufficient fluency in English so they can function in the regular classroom as quickly as possible.

Special Education Needs

http://education.alberta.ca/admin/special.aspx

The *School Act* specifies that school boards are responsible for determining if a student is in need of a special education program. Students with special education needs, including those with mild, moderate and severe disabilities, and those who are gifted and talented, require specialized learning opportunities in order to receive an education that is consistent with their identified learning needs. School boards must provide special education programming for all students identified with special education needs.

If you feel your child has learning difficulties, you should talk to the classroom teacher to share knowledge about your child that could assist in determining the cause of these difficulties and in deciding if there are specific teaching and learning strategies that might improve your child's learning. School staff can use a number of informal ways to identify learning needs. If it is apparent that school-based strategies are not enough, the teacher, in consultation with parents, will make a referral for a specialized assessment. Your child's teacher or the school principal will have information on the assessment procedures for your area.

Students with special education needs may require changes to: instruction, assessment strategies, materials and resources, classroom environment, equipment and/or the regular curriculum. In addition, some students may require referral to specialized health-care services.

For more information on a Review by the Minister, contact the Disputes Management Team Leader at 780–427–7235 or see Policy 3.5.1– Review by the Minister http://education.alberta.ca/department/policy/k-12manual/section3/review.aspx.

Most students with special education needs are placed in regular classrooms in their neighbourhood or local schools and are provided with programming, supports and services to meet their individual needs throughout the school day. There are a range of programming options possible—different students need different kinds of support. Deciding on the educational programming for an individual student is a collaborative process and, in most instances, parents and school staff agree on appropriate placements. If there is a disagreement, parents can appeal a decision at the district level. The school principal can provide information on the appeal procedure in your district. If parents do not agree with the decision of an appeal to the school board they may write to the Minister of Education and ask for a review of a board decision.

All students with identified special education needs require an individualized program plan (IPP). An IPP is a plan of action with meaningful and measurable goals. It identifies your child's specific strengths, needs and current level of performance. The IPP also explains what your child will be learning and the strategies used to support your child's learning. The IPP is flexible and must be updated regularly. Parents, school staff and the student need to work together as a learning team to ensure that the IPP is implemented.

The following resources provide additional information.

http://education.alberta.ca/media/448939/Learning.pdf

- *The Learning Team: A Handbook for Parents of Children with Special Needs* (2003) – Information for parents of children with special needs.

http://education.alberta.ca/media/511387/specialed_stds2004.pdf

- *Standards for Special Education*, Amended June 2004 – Information on the requirements for school boards regarding delivery of education programs and services to students with special needs in grades 1–12.

http://education.alberta.ca/admin/special/programming/components.aspx

- The *Essential Components of Educational Programming* series – Information on appropriate educational programming, as outlined in the *Standards for Special Education, Amended June 2004*.
  - Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders
  - Students with Behaviour Disabilities
  - Students Who Are Blind or Visually Impaired
  - Students Who Are Deaf or Hard of Hearing.

http://education.alberta.ca/media/511684/ecep_autism_spectrum_disorder.pdf
http://education.alberta.ca/media/511687/ecep_behaviour_disabilities.pdf
http://education.alberta.ca/media/511690/ecep_blind_or_visually_impaired.pdf
http://education.alberta.ca/media/511693/ecep_deaf_or_hard_of_hearing.pdf

http://education.alberta.ca/media/448831/journey.pdf

- *The Journey: A Handbook for Parents of Children Who Are Gifted and Talented* (2004) – Information and strategies for nurturing your child's learning and emotional well-being at home, in school and in the community.

http://education.alberta.ca/media/308566/aboriginalparenthandbook.pdf

The *Handbook for Aboriginal Parents of Children with Special Needs* and *Our Treasured Children* videotape are available for purchase from the Learning Resources Centre (LRC). Order online at http://www.lrc.education.gov.ab.ca/pro/resources/item.htm?item-no=415712.

- *A Handbook for Aboriginal Parents of Children with Special Needs* (2000) – Information for Aboriginal parents about rights and responsibilities regarding the education of their children with special needs.
- *Our Treasured Children* is a videotape that complements *A Handbook for Aboriginal Parents of Children with Special Needs*. It highlights intergenerational stories from members of the Aboriginal community. The videotape is available for purchase from the LRC.

Distributed Learning

Alberta Education provides leadership and resources for distributed learning in Alberta's educational institutions. Distributed learning is a model through which learning is distributed among a variety of delivery formats and mediums—print, digital (online) and traditional delivery methods—allowing teachers, students and content to be located in different, noncentralized locations.

http://www.lrc.education.gov.ab.ca/pro/default.html

Distributed learning resources are provincially authorized resources that support educational program delivery in Alberta. For information about purchasing distributed learning resources, contact the Learning Resources Centre.

http://www.tools4teachers.ca/t4t

Alberta Education also makes digital content available through the Tools4Teachers Web site. The site provides multimedia segments and digital versions of print-based distributed learning resources. Alberta educators have free access to this digital content, which they can use in the development of their own lessons.

Digital Resources to Support Curriculum Outcomes

http://www.learnalberta.ca

LearnAlberta.ca is a Web site that provides quality online resources to the Kindergarten to Grade 12 community in Alberta. It is a safe, reliable and innovative collection of learning resources developed by Alberta Education in consultation with stakeholders. Students, teachers and parents can access multimedia learning resources here that are based on Alberta Education curriculum guidelines. A featured resource is the Online Reference Centre, a collection of multimedia encyclopedias in French and English. These reference materials include newspapers, magazines, books, maps, pictures, videos and transcripts suitable for all grades and subject areas.

User ID's and passwords are available from school principals or by e-mailing: LearnAlberta.Contact@edc.gov.ab.ca.

Assessment

Assessing Student Achievement

http://education.alberta.ca/admin/testing/achievement.aspx

In the classroom, a teacher uses a variety of means to assess students' learning throughout the school year. These assessments are based on the instruction being provided, in order to inform the teacher's planning from day to day. Classroom assessment may serve a diagnostic purpose, indicating students' strengths and weaknesses in specific skill areas. At other times classroom assessment may be formative, indicating how well students have achieved in a unit of study or how well they have achieved to a particular point in the course. At the end of a school year, a teacher also assesses how well the students have achieved the expected learning outcomes in the curriculum for that grade. This type of assessment is designed primarily for reporting purposes. All these classroom assessments are integral to instruction.

Feedback Form

Curriculum Handbook for Parents 2008–2009: Grade 4
Catholic School Version

Please indicate whether you are a:

☐ Parent ☐ Teacher ☐ School Administrator ☐ District Administrator ☐ Other (please specify) _____

Please indicate whether you used:

☐ a print copy ☐ the online format ☐ both

Please respond to the following by placing a check mark under **Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Agree** or **Strongly Agree**.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. The handbook provides useful information.				
2. The amount of information is appropriate.				
3. The reading level is appropriate.				
4. The layout and organization are user-friendly.				
5. The links to the Alberta Education Web site are helpful.				
6. Downloading and printing is easy.				

How can this handbook be made more helpful to parents?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Thank you for your feedback.

Please send your response to:

Director, Curriculum Branch
Alberta Education
10044 – 108 Street NW
Edmonton, Alberta, Canada
T5J 5E6
Fax: 780–422–3745